

TxDOT Railroad Project Coordination

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TxDOT Railroad Project Coordination

My message for today is:

Communication
+ Coordination
= Cooperation



Everything is Bigger in Texas!

- Texas is the Number One state in the Union with the most:
- Highway-rail grade crossings
- Hwy-rail crossing crashes & fatalities
- Miles of railroad tracks



FY 2007 TxDOT 'Let' Projects Requiring a Railroad Agreement

- 108 Projects scheduled for letting thru August 2007.
Summary:
- Close 7 crossings, open 4 crossings
- 8 new grade separations (7 overpass, 1 underpass)
- 12 replacement grade separations (9 over, 3 under)
- 88 Projects for RRFA at existing crossings or joint highway-rail facilities (signals, planking, drainage)



Railroad Project Coordination

- Missed or delayed letting several of the 20+ bridge projects scheduled due to lack of a railroad agreement.
- “A-No. 1 Problem” - Waiting on the Railroad
- Unresolved project design issues
- Not enough lead time & incomplete PS&E.



Railroad Side of Public Projects

- Too much going on
- Wicked cycle of “crisis management”
- Centralized Railroad management structure (UPRR)
- Railroad review & approval process



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Railroad Project Development Process

- Project concept & design approval can be a lengthy process... 18 – 24 months depending on the Project. (Underpass takes longer)
- Communicate & Coordinate with Railroads & TxDOT Divisions (TRF - BRG - DES) EARLY
- Pre-design meeting to get a clear understanding of Railroad's operations & expectations



Railroad Project Development Process - Districts

- Coordinate design activities with TRF and BRG throughout project development
- Keep TRF & BRG apprised of meetings with Railroads and outcome of those meetings
- Manage consultant's coordination activities w/ Railroads to avoid unnecessary design elements being added w/o TxDOT approval.
- Send in a complete design package to avoid delays and minimize revisions

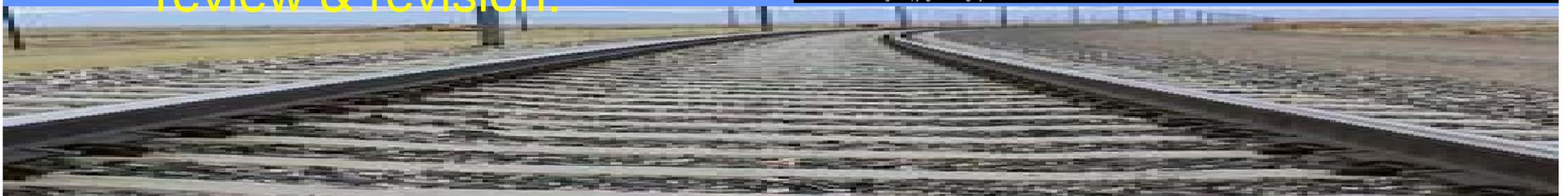


Railroad Project Development Process-Divisions

- TRF is TxDOT point of contact with Railroads.
- All plan submissions for approval go thru TRF (& BRG) for review before going to Railroad
- Review comments & revisions are also coordinated thru TRF-RR
- Avoid confusion & “whose on first” issues during review & revision.



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Railroad Project Development Resources

- TRF & BRG Section personnel are the TxDOT 'experts' at dealing with Railroads
- TRF-RR "Guide to Railroad Project Development"
- Railroad "Guidelines for RR Grade Separation Projects"



Sher's Survival Guide

- Developed earlier this year in response to incomplete project submissions w/o enough lead time.
- Use to train and advise districts on process, procedures and responsibilities in railroad project development
- Approval timelines
- Content of plan submissions
- Agreement requirements
- Already needs to be updated



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UP/BNSF Guidelines for RR Grade Separation Projects

- Released earlier this year to provide consistent bridge design & establish RR's expectations.
- TRF-RR & BRG preparing "annotated" version for use on TxDOT projects
- Approval timelines
- Agreement requirements
- Bridge Standards



UP/BNSF Guidelines for RR Grade Separation Projects – “Highlights”

- No interruption to railroad operations during or after construction.
- Overpass spanning RR ROW is highly recommended
- Underpass is discouraged and approved only if temporary shoo-fly track & structure is provided
- Project design which deviates from guidelines will result in design revisions and delays
- Railroad turnaround of 30-days on review time!
- Underpass vertical clearance of 23'-4" exceeds current FHWA minimum requirement of 23'



Railroad Project Development: Keys to Success

- **Allow plenty of lead time**
- **Involve Railroad early in pre-design meetings**
- **Involve Divisions - TRF and BRG**
- **Follow process and design guidelines**
- **Manage consultants work activities**
- **Submit complete set of plans with all supporting documentation**
- **Handle revisions and comments in a timely manner**
- **Clear Communication and Coordination are key to achieving the level of Cooperation necessary to successfully develop railroad projects**



Railroad Project Development: Other Resources & Conferences

- FHWA “Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Handbook” update now available thru ITE at “ite.org” website.
Upcoming Conferences:
- National Highway-Rail Crossing Safety Conference in San Antonio, November 4 – 7, 2007
- 2008 Mid-States Highway-Rail Safety Meeting, in Grapevine, May 19 – 21, 2008. To be held in conjunction with AREMA/RSSI annual conference and exhibition



QUESTIONS?

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